AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A water feature comprising a vessel for containing a volume of water and having a body, a central longitudinal axis, a water inlet and a water outlet, the water inlet being arranged substantially tangentially to the body of the vessel so as to impart rotational movement to the volume of water around the central longitudinal axis when water is introduced thereto, and a controller for controlling the rate of water inlet in comparison to the rate of water outlet so as to vary the height of the volume of water in the vessel,

wherein the water outlet is a central drain located on or near [[a]] and extending generally along the central axis of the vessel and located and configured so that water exiting the vessel flows generally in a direction of the central axis.

2. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a timing device in association with the controller so that the height of the volume of water in the vessel can be varied over a predetermined period of time.

3. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 2, wherein the timing device is adapted to vary the height of the volume of water in the vessel between a minimum height and a maximum height over a predetermined period of one hour.

4. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a sump with which the water inlet and water outlet of the vessel communicate, the sump comprising a vent to allow air travelling along the water outlet to be vented in preference to entering the water inlet.

5. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 1, wherein the water outlet has a drain port and a downstream portion, the downstream portion having a diameter which is greater than that of the drain port.

6. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 1, wherein an airtight lid is provided on the upper end of the vessel body to prevent water overflow therefrom.

7. (Previously Presented) A water feature as claimed in claim 1, wherein the body of the vessel comprises a cylindrical tube having a circular cross-section.

8. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a further vessel which is arranged coaxially with the vessel, the further vessel having a body, a water inlet and a water outlet and a controller for controlling the rate of water inlet in comparison to the rate of water outlet so as to vary the height of the volume of water in the further vessel.

9. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 8, wherein the further vessel surrounds the vessel.

10. (Original) A water vessel as claimed in claim 9, wherein the further vessel is substantially spherical or cylindrical.

11. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 10, further comprising a timing device in association with the controller so that the height of the volume of water in the further vessel can be varied over a predetermined period of time.

12. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 11, wherein the timing device is adapted to vary the height of the volume of water in the further vessel between a minimum height and a maximum height over a predetermined period of twelve hours.

13. (Original) A water feature as claimed in claim 8, wherein a float is provided in the further vessel.

14. (Previously Presented) A water feature as claimed in claim 8, wherein a first pump is provided for introducing water to the vessel and a second pump is provided for introducing water to the further vessel.

15. (Previously Presented) A water feature comprising:

(a) a water reservoir;

(b) a first vessel having a body, a water inlet communicating with the water reservoir and a water outlet communicating with the water reservoir, the water inlet being arranged so as to introduce water tangentially to the body of the first vessel;

(c) an inlet valve associated with the water inlet of the first vessel and an outlet valve associated with the water outlet of the first vessel;

(d) a controller associated with the inlet valve of the first vessel and the outlet valve of the first vessel to allow the rate of water entry to the first vessel to be controlled with respect to the rate of water outlet therefrom;

(e) a second vessel having a body, a water inlet communicating with the water reservoir and a water outlet communicating with the water reservoir, the body of the second vessel surrounding the body of the first vessel;

(f) an inlet valve associated with the water inlet of the second vessel and an outlet valve associated with the water outlet of the second vessel, the water inlet of the second vessel and the water outlet of the second vessel being associated with the controller to allow the rate of water entry to the second vessel to be controlled with respect to the rate of water outlet therefrom;

(g) a first pump for transferring water from the water reservoir to the water inlet of the first vessel; and

(h) a second pump for transferring water from the water reservoir to the water inlet of the second vessel.

16. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a water feature comprising at least one closed vessel containing a volume of water, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(a) causing the volume of water to rotate about [[an]] a central longitudinal axis of the closed vessel so as to form a vortex therein; and

(b) causing the volume of water to vary in height over time,

wherein water is continuously introduced to and drained from the closed vessel, the rate of introduction exceeding the rate of draining when the height of the water volume is increasing and the rate of draining exceeding the rate of introduction when the height of the water volume is decreasing.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a water feature comprising at least one closed vessel containing a volume of water, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(a) causing the volume of water to rotate about [[an]] a central longitudinal axis of the closed vessel so as to form a vortex therein; and

(b) causing the volume of water to vary in height over time,

wherein air is introduced to or removed from the closed vessel via an outlet of the vessel as the height of the volume of water is varied.

19. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a water feature comprising at least one vessel containing a volume of water, comprising the steps of:

(a) causing the volume of water to rotate about an axis of the vessel so as to form a vortex therein; and

(b) causing the volume of water to vary in height over time,

wherein the rotating volume of water is caused to vary in height over a predetermined period of time so as to provide, by its height, an indication of the time.

20. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the height of the rotating volume of water increases from a minimum height to a maximum height over a period of sixty minutes and a second volume of water, contained within a further vessel arranged so as to surround the vessel, is caused to increase in height from a minimum height to a maximum height over a period of twelve hours.